

Reference: 02014861

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

14 July 2025

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about complaints and internal assessments regarding climate-related broadcast content.

We received this request on 16 June 2025 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOI Act").

Your request

1. *A breakdown of viewer complaints submitted to Ofcom between 1 January 2021 and 1 January 2024 that reference:*

- *"climate change"*
- *"climate misinformation"*
- *"Net Zero"*
- *"global warming"*
- *"environmental falsehoods" or similar terms*

Please include, where held:

- *The number of complaints per incident or broadcast*
 - *The programme/channel name*
 - *The nature of the complaint (brief description)*
 - *Whether any action was taken (e.g. investigation, upheld/rejected, or regulatory follow-up)*
2. *Copies of any internal assessments, summaries, or guidance notes produced by Ofcom during that time relating to how climate-related complaints are assessed under the Broadcasting Code (especially concerning due accuracy or misleading content).*

Our response

By way of background, Ofcom publishes decisions about complaints we have received in the [Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin](#) ("the Bulletin") every fortnight on our website. The Bulletin covers a range of cases, including those which Ofcom has escalated for full investigation, those which Ofcom has decided not to pursue because they did not raise issues warranting investigation, and those which fall outside Ofcom's remit (e.g. under the BBC's Charter and Agreement set by Parliament, complaints about BBC programmes are considered under a system of "BBC First", whereby a viewer or listener must normally complain to the BBC in the first instance and complete

the BBC's complaints process before complaining to Ofcom). Ofcom assesses every complaint it receives, and while a complaint may provide contextual background to a programme, when Ofcom is conducting an initial assessment or investigation, it reaches its own view as to whether there may have been, and then whether there has been, a breach of the [Ofcom Broadcasting Code](#) ("the Code").

Regarding your first request, please refer to the attached Annex A for complaint information related to the requested key terms and time period.

With respect to your second request, we can confirm that we do not hold any internal guidance notes for the assessment of climate related complaints.

We consider internal assessments and summaries of individual complaints to be exempt from disclosure under s44 of the FOI Act. In particular, section 44(1)(a) of the FOI Act exempts disclosure of information if its disclosure is prohibited by or under any enactment. Section 393 of the Communications Act 2003 ("the Act") prohibits the disclosure of information about a particular business which has been obtained in exercise of a power conferred by, among other legislation, the Act, so long as that business continues to be carried on, unless we have the consent of that business or one of the statutory gateways under section 393(2) of the Act is met, neither of which applies here. Section 44 of the FOI Act is an absolute exemption and therefore is not subject to a public interest test.

We hope this information is helpful. If you have any further queries, then please send them to information.requests@ofcom.org.uk – quoting the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely,

Information Requests

Request an internal review

If you are unhappy with the response you have received to your request for information, or think that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law, you may ask for an internal review. If you do, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom. We will either uphold the original decision, or reverse or modify it.

If you would like to ask us to carry out an internal review, you should get in touch within two months of the date of this letter. There is no statutory deadline for us to complete our internal review, and the time it takes will depend on the complexity of the request. But we will try to complete the review within 20 working days (or no more than 40 working days in exceptional cases) and keep you informed of our progress. Please email the Information Requests team (information.requests@ofcom.org.uk) to request an internal review.

Taking it further

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our internal review, then you have the right to [complain to the Information Commissioner's Office](#).